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United Nations

Statistical Commission

Report on the thirty-ninth session (26 to 29 February 2008)

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Note

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

1. The Statistical Commission recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the Statistical Commission on its thirty-ninth session and provisional agenda and dates for the fortieth session of the Commission

The Economic and Social Council:

(a) Takes note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its thirty-ninth session;

(b) Decides that the fortieth session of the Commission shall be held in New York from 24 to 27 February 2009;

(c) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the fortieth session of the Commission as set out below:

Provisional agenda for the fortieth session of the Commission

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

   Documentation

   Provisional agenda and annotations

   Note by the Secretariat on the organization of the work of the session

   Note by the Secretariat on the state of preparation of documentation for the session

3. Programme review: climate change and official statistics.

   Documentation

   Report of the programme reviewer

4. Demographic and social statistics:

   (a) Population and housing censuses;

   Documentation

   Report of the Secretary-General

(b) Human settlements statistics;

Documentation

Report of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

(c) Paris Group on Labour and Compensation;

Documentation

Report of the Paris Group on Labour and Compensation

(d) Health statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics

(e) Social statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(f) Education statistics;

Documentation

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(g) Statistics on drugs and drug use;

Documentation

Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

(h) Washington Group on Disability Measurement;

Documentation

Report of the Washington Group on Disability Measurement

(i) Migration statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(j) Employment statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

(k) Gender statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the Global Gender Statistics Programme

Report of the Friends of the Chair on the review of indicators on violence against women

(l) Culture statistics.

Documentation

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

5. Economic statistics:

(a) National accounts;

Documentation

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts

(b) Agricultural statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(c) Business registers;

Documentation

Report of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers

(d) Energy statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

Report of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

(e) Statistics of services;

Documentation

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Services Statistics

Report of the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics

(f) Information and communication technologies statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communication Technologies for Development

(g) International Comparison Programme;

Documentation

Report of the World Bank

(h) Price statistics.

Documentation

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics

6. Natural Resources and Environment Statistics:

(a) Environmental Accounting.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

7. Activities not classified by field:

(a) Coordination and integration of statistical programmes;

Documentation

Report of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

(b) Management issues in national statistical offices;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(c) Implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(d) Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata;

Documentation

Report of the Task Force to Establish Standards on Data and Metadata Exchange

(e) Coordination of ongoing methodological work;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(f) Statistical capacity-building;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

Report of the Steering Committee of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century

(g) Development indicators;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(h) Follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(i) Working methods of the Statistical Commission;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(j) Regional statistical development.

Documentation

Report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

8. Programme questions (United Nations Statistics Division).

9. Provisional agenda and dates for the forty-first session of the Commission.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for the forty-first session of the Commission

Note by the Secretariat on the draft multi-year programme of work of the Commission

10. Report of the Commission on its fortieth session.

B. Decisions brought to the attention of the Council

2. The following decisions adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the Council:

39/101
Programme review: employment statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Commended the high-quality programme review report on labour statistics prepared by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,[1] took note of the recommendations therein, and welcomed the constructive response and commitments made by the International Labour Organization;

[1] E/CN.3/2008/2.

(b) Emphasized the need for better coordination to improve the quality and coherence of labour statistics at the national and global levels, which should be done in consultation with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities;

(c) Reiterated the importance of methodological developments, including the harmonization of conceptual frameworks, related definitions and possible assessment and updating of the labour accounting framework, emphasized that that work was to be driven by the existing expert and working groups, and also reiterated that broad country representation, including from developing countries, should be ensured;

(d) Considered that full implementation of the recommendations of the programme review could overburden the International Labour Organization, given existing resources, emphasized the need for prioritization of those recommendations, and requested the development of a road map for their implementation;

(e) Asked the donor community to support international technical assistance to enhance the capability of developing countries to produce high-quality labour statistics, and noted that technical assistance should be coordinated and implemented within existing technical cooperation programmes;

(f) Welcomed the work done by the International Labour Organization Conference of the Labour Statisticians and suggested that it might wish to review its methods of operation, in particular the frequency and duration of its sessions, and urged the member States to attend the forthcoming conference;

(g) Requested the International Labour Organization to report to the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session on the outcomes of the Conference and other actions taken in the implementation of the recommendations of the review report, including the road map.

39/102
Education statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on the progress of the work of the Task Force on Education Statistics;[2]

(b) Took note of the proposed method of work in producing the final report of the Task Force;

(c) Recognized the importance of ownership by member States, and reinforced the importance of the Task Force as a forum for discussion to elaborate on a general framework for international education statistics and to provide recommendations on mechanisms for improved coordination among international agencies mandated to work in education statistics;

(d) Requested that the Task Force broaden its regional representation in terms of national statistical offices to better reflect the diverse realities in different parts of the world;

[2] E/CN.3/2008/3.

(e) Requested that the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, on behalf of the Task Force, report to the Commission at its next session.

39/103
International Comparison Programme

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the successful completion of the 2005 round of the International Comparison Programme, covering 146 countries, as a major achievement and took note of the release schedule of the results;

(b) Expressed appreciation to the World Bank, the Global Office of the International Comparison Programme, the Executive Board, the Technical Advisory Group, the regional coordinators, the participating countries and the various Programme partners providing technical and funding support to bring the 2005 round to conclusion;

(c) Took note of the comprehensive report of the Friends of the Chair on the evaluation of the 2005 round[3] and supported its conclusions and recommendations and, in particular:

(i) Strongly endorsed the continuation of the International Comparison Programme with a target year of 2011 for the next round in order to sustain the momentum of the 2005 round in terms of accumulated experience and enhanced capacity at the country level and to link the Programme more effectively with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Eurostat programme;

(ii) Supported the ambition to cover the full gross domestic product in the comparison to contribute to national accounts development in the countries involved;

(iii) Requested the World Bank to continue hosting the Global Office of the International Comparison Programme, and acknowledged the outstanding role played by the World Bank in that complex undertaking;

(iv) Encouraged regional coordinating offices to maintain their International Comparison Programme coordination roles for the next round;

(d) Endorsed the establishment of an interim executive board comprising members of the current Executive Board, the convenor of the Friends of the Chair group and interested members of the Friends of the Chair group. A subcommittee of the interim board, with terms of reference endorsed by the Bureau of the Statistical Commission, should handle operational matters critical to the next round, including the hiring of the next Global Manager, fund-raising strategy, organizing feedback from users, addressing lessons learned from the 2005 round and undertaking pilot studies for conducting methodological studies;

(e) Looked forward to the discussion at its fortieth session of the full modalities for implementation of the next round, and requested the World Bank to prepare a strategic paper including:

[3] E/CN.3/2008/4.

(i) A plan to extend International Comparison Programme coverage to more countries, in particular Pacific, Caribbean, and Central American countries;

(ii) Clarification of data access and data-sharing policies;

(iii) Proposals to engage key stakeholders and senior user communities of participating countries to generate support and ensure higher priority for participation in the International Comparison Programme;

(iv) Proposals to build sustained technical cooperation programmes not only in price statistics but also in national accounts, in order to prepare for implementation of the International Comparison Programme;

(v) Proposals on how to integrate the International Comparison Programme into national statistical programmes;

(vi) An outline of a plan to work with key national and international users of the International Comparison Programme, both current and potential, to encourage use of the results;

(f) Took note of the concern that 2011, as the proposed benchmark year for the next round, might present difficulties in several countries since the year overlapped with conducting population censuses, and therefore requested that the International Comparison Programme organizers consider a suitable strategy to deal with the matter;

(g) Encouraged the partners in the International Comparison Programme to continue their capacity-building efforts in developing countries to increase the quality of the data available for the next round.

39/104
National accounts

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Expressed its appreciation of the members of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts, including the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations and the World Bank, and of members of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts for their work leading to the submission of volume 1 of the updated System of National Accounts, and recognized the significant contributions of the Project Manager, Carol Carson, and the Editor of the System of National Accounts update, Anne Harrison;

(b) Adopted, in principle, volume 1 of the updated System of National Accounts as the international standard for national accounts statistics, and encouraged member States and regional and international organizations to implement the standard and support all aspects of the implementation of the updated System of National Accounts, including the national and international reporting of national accounts statistics based on the updated System of National Accounts;

(c) Recognized that the time required to evaluate volume 1 of the updated System of National Accounts as a whole was insufficient, and endorsed the Intersecretariat Working Group proposal to introduce an additional two-month period, until the end of April 2008, for completing its review. The review period will

allow all stakeholders to examine the conceptual coherence and consistency of the System with the recommendations on the 44 issues adopted by the Commission at its thirty-eighth session in 2007 and the clarifications and consistency issues that flowed from those. During the two-month review period, countries and international organizations will be invited to bring to the attention of the Intersecretariat Working Group their substantive observations but not their drafting changes or revisions to the agreed recommendations;

(d) Mandated the Intersecretariat Working Group to proceed with the finalization and publication of volume 1, after approval by the Bureau of the Commission, in pre-edited electronic and paper versions, taking into account the substantive observations made during the two-month review period;

(e) Recognized that the official editing of volume 1 would be undertaken as a priority, and noted the plan for its subsequent publication in the official languages of the United Nations;

(f) Requested the Intersecretariat Working Group to take appropriate measures to ensure that volume 2 of the updated System of National Accounts was duly completed and submitted for adoption to the Commission at its fortieth session, in accordance with its commitment to the Commission at its thirty-eighth session;

(g) Urged the Intersecretariat Working Group to submit a strategy for implementation of the updated System of National Accounts in the context of development cooperation to the Commission at its fortieth session. The strategy should take into account the inputs of the Conference on international outreach and coordination in national accounts for sustainable growth and development, held from 6 to 8 May 2008 and jointly organized by the United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the Statistical Office of the European Communities, and of other intergovernmental and regional meetings elaborating on action plans for the implementation;

(h) Recognized that the detailed strategy should reflect the need for regional and subregional coordination, given the different levels of statistical development, and elaborate on the advocacy strategy to engage users, especially those engaged in policy formulation and analysis;

(i) Welcomed the proposal contained in the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts[4] to convene a meeting in 2008 for interested countries and other stakeholders to work out the modalities of the creation of a high-level group on national accounts and to report to the Commission at its fortieth session on the outcome of the meeting;

(j) Requested the Intersecretariat Working Group to seek the opinion of Member States, during the two-month review period of volume 1, on the title of the updated System of National Accounts, based on a balanced consideration of the preferences for the title, and to inform the Bureau of the Commission of its assessment. The Bureau will seek concurrence of the Commission members regarding its decision.

[4] E/CN.3/2008/5.

39/105
Integrated economic statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed with appreciation the high quality and comprehensiveness of the report of the Friends of the Chair on integrated economic statistics,[5] and congratulated the Moderator and members of the Friends of the Chair group for the report;

(b) Agreed with the findings and the recommendations of the Friends of the Chair as set out in the report;

(c) Affirmed the role of the System of National Accounts as the integrating framework in economic statistics, and recognized the importance of increasing the coherence of basic economic statistics for enhancing the quality and analytical value of both basic economic statistics and macroeconomic statistics;

(d) Agreed with the need to collect and disseminate case studies and develop other practical knowledge material to share experiences and guide countries in the process of implementing an integrated approach in their national statistical systems, and also agreed that there might be a need to develop a framework for establishing such guidelines;

(e) Recommended that guidance on practical aspects of integration should focus, in particular, on the need for cooperation with users and data suppliers; on development of central business registers and use of administrative data; on conceptual harmonization of data content across surveys; on strong and centralized coordination of survey operations within the national statistical institution; on the need to have within a national statistical institution an entity that was specialized in preparing administrative data to be matched to survey data; and on a sampling strategy that took into account the burden of the reporting entities;

(f) Underscored that such guidelines should be tied to economic theory and highlight the differences between a centralized and decentralized statistical system;

(g) Took note of the difficulties faced by developing countries in collecting basic economic statistics, in the cost of setting up and maintaining a central business register, in building an administrative infrastructure of data collection, in maintaining databases, and in obtaining data from respondents not captured in business surveys, and suggested that such issues be given due consideration in providing guidance, with a view to furthering the integration of economic statistics;

(h) Acknowledged that the merits of developing an integrated system of statistics deserved consideration beyond economic statistics;

(i) Suggested that the follow-up should be led by a new Friends of the Chair group, and requested interested countries to join in the collaborative effort and to express their interest in undertaking the role of the Moderator of the group.

[5] E/CN.3/2008/6.

39/106
Tourism statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the joint report of the Secretary-General and the World Tourism Organization,[6] and commended the United Nations Statistics Division and the World Tourism Organization on the successful completion of the revision process;

(b) Adopted the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 and requested that the final text of the recommendations be edited to reflect suggestions by the Commission;

(c) Requested the World Tourism Organization and United Nations Statistical Division to develop an implementation programme, including preparation of a compilation guide and organization of training workshops, in collaboration with supranational and regional organizations;

(d) Took note of the updated version of the Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008;

(e) Requested that the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008 and the Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008 be made available in all of the official languages of the United Nations as soon as possible.

39/107
Distributive trade statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on distributive trade statistics[7] and the background document entitled International Recommendation for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008;

(b) Adopted the International Recommendation for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008, as contained in the background document;

(c) Agreed to the implementation programme of the International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008 as outlined in the report, including the organization of regional training workshops, the collection of national practices on distributive trade statistics and the preparation of Distributive Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual and the Indices of Distributive Trade: A Handbook of Good Practices, and requested that implementational concerns expressed by Commission members be taken into account.

[6] E/CN.3/2008/7.
[7] E/CN.3/2008/8.

39/108
Industrial statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on industrial statistics[8] and the background document entitled International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008;

(b) Adopted part I of the document on international recommendation for industrial statistics 2008, containing the recommendations for statistical units, characteristics of statistical units, data items and their definitions and the data items for international reporting as the international recommendations for industrial statistics;

(c) Endorsed part II of the document, containing guidance on performance indicators, data sources and data compilation methods, data collection strategy, data quality and metadata and dissemination of industrial statistics, as supplementary guidance for the implementation of the international recommendations;

(d) Agreed to the proposal for implementation of the International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008 through regional capacity-building workshops in cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the development of a knowledge-base platform on basic economic statistics;

(e) Took note of the proposed future work of the United Nations Statistics Division on industrial statistics, including the completion of the revision of the Manual on Index Numbers of Industrial Production;

(f) Requested that implementational concerns expressed by Commission members be taken into account.

39/109
International merchandise trade statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on international merchandise trade statistics,[9] endorsed the United Nations Statistics Division initiative and strategy to revise the existing recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics, and requested that the draft revised recommendations be submitted to the Commission for adoption at its forty-first session, in 2010;

(b) Took note of the terms of reference for the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics;

(c) Requested that the revised recommendations provide an updated conceptual framework, as well as guidance on data compilation and dissemination, in the context of an integrated approach to economic statistics;

[8] E/CN.3/2008/9
[9] E/CN.3/2008/10.

(d) Requested that the revised recommendations be harmonized to the extent possible with the updated recommendations for statistics of international trade in services, the system of national accounts and the balance of payments statistics;

(e) Requested that, in respect of revising the recommendations, due consideration be given to the concern of minimizing the cost of data collection and compilation;

(f) Took note of the commitment expressed by the Statistical Office of the European Community, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization to actively participate in the revision process.

39/110
Statistics of human development

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report prepared by the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Programme,[10] and expressed its appreciation for the steps being taken to enhance data quality assurance;

(b) Underscored the importance of the Human Development Report at national and international levels as a source of information on development issues;

(c) Welcomed actions taken to ensure the quality of data and indicators published in the Human Development Report, in particular of the creation of a statistical advisory panel, the institution of a statistical peer review process and the initiative on holding regular consultations with member States;

(d) Emphasized the need for the Human Development Report Office to further improve transparency in the process of preparing the Human Development Report; in particular, the Commission urged the Office to:

(i) Intensify consultations with countries on the statistics used in the calculation of the Human Development Index;

(ii) Make additional efforts, in accordance to with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6, to use country data instead of international estimates whenever and wherever those data are available;

(iii) Conduct pre-publication quality checks on data and indicators with national statistical offices;

(iv) In respect of missing data, handle the use of international estimates in the preparation of the Human Development Report with care, in full consultation with countries and in a transparent manner;

(e) Took note of the initiative by the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities to compile information on regional training institutions that would help to assess statistical training needs and capacities across regions;

(f) Invited the United Nations Statistics Division and the World Bank, in consultation with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, to

[10] E/CN.3/2008/11.

explore the feasibility of developing an electronic platform that could house information on demand for training, potential training providers and funding options, including description of donor funding objectives and policies.

39/111
Collection and dissemination of statistics by the United Nations Statistics Division

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretary-General containing an update on the current practices of the United Nations Statistics Division with respect to data collection and data dissemination activities;[11]

(b) Encouraged the United Nations Statistics Division to continue initiatives to reduce the reporting burden on countries, including through joint data-collection agreements;

(c) Reconfirmed the mandate of the United Nations Statistics Division to act as a facilitator in addressing country concerns, with respect to duplicate data requests by international organizations;

(d) Welcomed initiatives to further facilitate and harmonize data exchange, and encouraged the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities to continue its work on developing appropriate tools;

(e) Encouraged the United Nations Statistics Division to make data available free of charge so as to facilitate its dissemination and use;

(f) Encouraged the United Nations Statistics Division to continue its initiative to facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries, with respect to dissemination policies and practices;

(g) Congratulated the United Nations Statistics Division for the development of the data portal UNdata, urging the Division at the same time to speed up implementation of the portal in order to develop its full potential by bringing together sectoral global, regional and national databases.

39/112
Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report on the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange initiative,[12] and recognized with appreciation the leadership of the sponsors in heading the initiative for more efficient data communication at national and international levels;

[11] E/CN.3/2008/12.
[12] E/CN.3/2008/13.

(b) Recognized and supported the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange as the preferred standard for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata, requested the sponsors to continue their work on the initiative, and encouraged its further implementation by national and international statistical organizations;

(c) Emphasized the need to further involve national and international agencies in the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange initiative by enabling opportunities for collaboration with the sponsoring organizations in order to influence decision-making and its governance to address their needs, especially in the area of developing cross-domain concepts. This should complement the activity already being undertaken with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities and its wide range of international institutions;

(d) Underlined the importance of capacity-building and outreach by organizing seminars and workshops and by preparing handbooks, manuals and implementation guidance through training and technical assistance;

(e) Welcomed the availability of the improved Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange website as the centrepoint of information about Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standards, cross-domain guidelines, activities in domains, implementation, tools and events, including opportunities to submit comments and information to be shared about national and international Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange developments;

(f) Requested the sponsors of the initiative to continue their work in fostering the development of freely available tools and software to benefit statistical systems in interchanges of data and metadata;

(g) Took note of the list of applications and projects at the national and international levels, which are making use of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange as a standard.

39/113
Regional statistical development in Africa

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Economic Commission for Africa,[13] and expressed satisfaction with the re-establishment of a focal point on statistics activities at the Economic Commission for Africa with the establishment of the African Centre for Statistics;

(b) Endorsed the proposed recommendations aimed at addressing the challenges facing African national statistical systems, as outlined in paragraph 25 of the report;

(c) Congratulated the African region for the first Statistical Commission for Africa and recognized that the Commission represented the apex entity of statistical systems on the continent;

[13] E/CN.3/2008/14.

(d) Noted that problems and solutions thereto, as well as the creation of various institutions for statistical coordination in Africa, have relevant lessons for other regions of the world;

(e) Called upon African countries to intensify efforts to develop their national capacities to produce timely and reliable statistics in support of their development efforts;

(f) Noted with appreciation the provision of the technical and financial support for statistical capacity-building in the African region by various agencies and development partners, and urged international agencies and the donor community to strengthen their support for statistical development in Africa.

39/114
Development indicators

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Considered the report of the Secretary-General on the indicators for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals[14] and commended the efforts by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators in implementing some of the recommendations contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6 and in including an increasing number of member States in its deliberations;

(b) Took note of paragraph 19 of the report on the deliberations of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the recommendations on the way forward;

(c) Also took note of the serious concerns expressed by several member States about the quality of the measurement of indicators, and requested submission of an updated report to the Commission at its next session;

(d) Reaffirmed Economic and Social Council resolution on 2006/6 statistical capacity-building, and reiterated the great importance it attached to its full implementation;

(e) Requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to give greater consideration to the need for improving the capacity of countries to produce the indicators;

(f) Also requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to develop recommendations on ways to improve statistical capacity-building in countries and to submit these to the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session;

(g) Requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group and all bodies involved to increase efforts to further improve the indicators of all Millennium Development Goals through methodological and technical refinements;

(h) Welcomed the assessment of data availability on Millennium Development Goal indicators, as set out yearly in the report, and requested the Group to report to the Commission at its fortieth session on an in-depth analysis of data availability and, to the extent possible, on data discrepancies between national and international data sets on Millennium Development Goal indicators;

[14] E/CN.3/2008/29 and Corr.1.

(i) Recognized the urgency of assisting countries in monitoring all internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and called on all partners, including the regional commissions, the United Nations and all international agencies, to assist countries in their statistical development in full respect of country demand and priorities and to facilitate the increase in financial support.

39/115
Health statistics

The Statistical Commission took note of the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics[15] and the report of the December 2007 meeting of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics, which was provided as a background document, and expressed its support for the ongoing work to improve coordination of health statistics and the proposed development of a framework.

39/116
Programme questions: United Nations Statistics Division

The Statistical Commission took note of the oral report presented by the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division concerning the current activities, plans and priorities of the Division and, in particular:

(a) Took note of the proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011, contained in an informal background paper that was circulated;

(b) In compliance with General Assembly resolution 62/133, approved the formation of a Friends of the Chair group to conduct an in-depth technical review of proposed indicators to measure violence against women, and requested the group to report back to the Commission at its fortieth session;

(c) Noted the intention of the United Nations Statistics Division to take the work on social statistics further and insisted that any proposal to the Commission at its next session on forming a city group in that field should be supported by specific terms of reference.

39/117
Documents considered by the Statistical Commission at its thirty-ninth session

The Statistical Commission took note of the following reports that were before it at its thirty-ninth session:

Report of the Secretary-General on population and housing censuses[16]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Round Table on Business Survey Frames[17]

[15] E/CN.3/2008/15.
[16] E/CN.3/2008/16.
[17] E/CN.3/2008/17.

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics[18]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services[19]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Ottawa Group on Price Indexes[20]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization[21]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics[22]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Wye Group on statistics on rural development and agriculture household income[23]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics[24]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting[25]

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities[26]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century[27]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the International Labour Organization[28]

Note by the Secretary-General on policy decisions of the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission[29]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the information note prepared by the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities on the implementation of principles governing international statistical activities[30]

[18] E/CN.3/2008/18.
[19] E/CN.3/2008/19.
[20] E/CN.3/2008/20.
[21] E/CN.3/2008/21.
[22] E/CN.3/2008/22.
[23] E/CN.3/2008/23.
[24] E/CN.3/2008/24.
[25] E/CN.3/2008/25.
[26] E/CN.3/2008/26.
[27] E/CN.3/2008/27.
[28] E/CN.3/2008/28.
[29] E/CN.3/2008/30.
[30] E/CN.3/2008/31.

Chapter II
Items for discussion and decision

A. Programme review: employment statistics

1. The Commission considered item 3 (a) of its agenda at its 1st and 7th meetings, on 26 and 29 February 2008. At its 1st meeting, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on labour statistics (E/CN.3/2008/2).

2. At the 1st meeting, on 26 February, the representative of the United Kingdom made an introductory statement.

3. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Finland, the Netherlands, Japan and Canada, as well as by the observers for Ghana, Australia, New Zealand, Suriname, Spain, Cuba, Cameroon, Jordan, Morocco and India. The observer for Palestine also made a statement.

4. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for the European Community and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The representatives of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean also made statements.

5. At the 1st meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

6. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (a) of its agenda.

7. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/101).

B. Education statistics

8. The Commission considered item 3 (b) of its agenda at its 1st and 7th meetings, on 26 and 29 February 2008. At its 1st meeting, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Task Force on Education Statistics (E/CN.3/2008/3).

9. At the 1st meeting, on 26 February, the representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) made an introductory statement. Also at the 1st meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Canada and Japan, as well as by the observers for Australia and Cuba. The observer for Palestine also made a statement.

10. At the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

11. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (b) of its agenda.

12. At the same meeting, following a statement by the representative of Canada, the Commission adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/102).

C. International Comparison Programme

13. The Commission considered item 3 (c) of its agenda at its 2nd and 7th meetings, on 26 and 29 February 2008. At its 2nd meeting, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Global Office of the International Comparison Programme at the World Bank (E/CN.3/2008/33) and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Friends of the Chair on the review of the International Comparison Programme (E/CN.3/2008/4).

14. At the 2nd meeting, on 26 February, the representatives of the World Bank and Norway made introductory statements.

15. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Canada, Finland, China, Japan, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, France, the Russian Federation, Lebanon, Hungary and Belarus, as well as by the observers for India, Cameroon, Slovenia, Suriname, Uganda, the Niger, Mongolia, Gabon, Ghana, Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Senegal, Australia, the Bahamas and Cuba.

16. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for OECD, the European Community, the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank and by the representatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

17. At the 2nd meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

18. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (c) of its agenda.

19. At the same meeting, following statements by the representatives of France, Canada and South Africa and the observers for Suriname, India, Palestine, the Niger and the Bahamas, the Commission adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/103).

D. National accounts

20. The Commission considered item 3 (d) of its agenda at its 2nd, 3rd and 7th meetings, on 26, 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (E/CN.3/2008/5).

21. At the 2nd meeting, on 26 February, the Chief of the Economic Statistics Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the representative of IMF made introductory statements.

22. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of France, Germany and the Russian Federation and by the observer for Côte d'Ivoire.

23. At the 3rd meeting, on 27 February, statements were made by the representatives of the United States and Japan, as well as by the observers for the Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil, Malaysia and Jordan.

24. At the same meeting, the observers for the European Community and for IMF and the representative of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific also made statements.

25. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

26. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (d) of its agenda.

27. At the same meeting, following statements by the representatives of Germany, France and Lebanon, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/104).

E. Integrated economic statistics

28. The Commission considered item 3 (e) of its agenda at its 3rd and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 3rd meeting, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Friends of the Chair on integrated economic statistics (E/CN.3/2008/6).

29. At the 3rd meeting, on 27 February, the observer for Switzerland made an introductory statement.

30. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom, Finland, Canada, Mexico, Jamaica and the United States, as well as by the observers for Egypt, the Niger, Malaysia and Morocco.

31. Also at the same meeting, the observer for the European Community and the representative of the ILO made statements.

32. At the 3rd meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

33. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (e) of its agenda.

34. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/105).

F. Tourism statistics

35. The Commission considered item 3 (f) of its agenda at its 3rd and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 3rd meeting, the Commission had before it the joint report of the Secretary-General and the World Tourism Organization on tourism statistics (E/CN.3/2008/7).

36. At the 3rd meeting, on 27 February, the representative of the World Tourism Organization made an introductory statement.

37. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Oman, China, Canada and Mexico, as well as by the observers for India, New Zealand, the Philippines, Italy, Saint Lucia, Cuba and the Bahamas. The observer for Palestine also made a statement.

38. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

39. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (f) of its agenda.

40. At the same meeting, following a statement by the observer for Senegal, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/106).

G. Distributive trade statistics

41. The Commission considered item 3 (g) of its agenda at its 3rd and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 3rd meeting, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on distributive trade statistics (E/CN.3/2008/8).

42. At the 3rd meeting, on 27 February, the Chief of the Trade Statistics Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, made an introductory statement.

43. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Japan, Canada, France, the United States and Belarus, as well as by the observer for the Philippines. The observer for the European Community also made a statement.

44. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

45. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (g) of its agenda.

46. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/107).

H. Industrial statistics

47. The Commission considered item 3 (h) of its agenda at its 3rd and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 3rd meeting, the Commission had before it the report by the Secretary-General on industrial statistics (E/CN.3/2008/9).

48. At the 3rd meeting, on 27 February, the Chief of the Economic Statistics Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, made an introductory statement.

49. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Lebanon, Japan and the Russian Federation and by the observers for Australia, the Republic of Korea, Chile and Peru.

50. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observer for the European Community and the representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

51. At the 3rd meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

52. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (h) of its agenda.

53. At the same meeting, following statements by the representatives of France and of UNIDO, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/108).

I. International merchandise trade statistics

54. The Commission considered item 3 (i) of its agenda at its 3rd, 4th and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on international merchandise trade statistics (E/CN.3/2008/10).

55. At the 3rd meeting, on 27 February, the Commission heard an introductory statement by the Chief of the Trade Statistics Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

56. At the 4th meeting, on 27 February, statements were made by the representative of Canada, as well as by the observers for Cuba, Egypt, India and Australia.

57. At the same meeting, observers for the European Community, the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization and the representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development also made statements.

58. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

59. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (i) of its agenda.

60. At the same meeting, following a statement by the observer for India, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/109).

J. Statistics of human development

61. The Commission considered item 3 (j) of its agenda at its 4th and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 4th meeting, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (E/CN.3/2008/11).

62. At the 4th meeting, on 27 February, the representative of UNDP made an introductory statement.

63. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Germany, Japan, South Africa and Jamaica, as well as by the observers for Senegal, Australia, the Niger, Jordan, Peru, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Cuba and Mongolia. The observer for the European Community also made a statement.

64. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

65. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (j) of its agenda.

66. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/110).

K. Collection and dissemination of statistics by the United Nations Statistics Division

67. The Commission considered item 3 (k) of its agenda at its 4th and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 4th meeting, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on collection and dissemination of statistics by the United Nations Statistics Division (E/CN.3/2008/12).

68. At the 4th meeting, on 27 February, the Chief of the Statistical Services Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, made an introductory statement.

69. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the Netherlands, China, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Jamaica and Canada, as well as by the observer for Suriname.

70. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

71. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (k) of its agenda.

72. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/111).

L. Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata

73. The Commission considered item 3 (l) of its agenda at its 4th and 7th meetings, on 27 and 29 February 2008. At its 4th meeting, the Commission had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata (E/CN.3/2008/13).

74. At the 4th meeting, on 27 February, the observer for the European Community made an introductory statement.

75. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Mexico, China, the Netherlands, Oman and the United States, as well as by the observers for Italy, Saint Lucia, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, Chile and India.

76. Also at the same meeting, the observer for OECD made a statement.

77. At the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

78. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (l) of its agenda.

79. At the same meeting, following statements by the observers for India and New Zealand, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/112).

M. Regional statistical development in Africa

80. The Commission considered item 3 (m) of its agenda at its 5th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (E/CN.3/2008/14).

81. At the 5th meeting, on 28 February, the representative of ECA made an introductory statement.

82. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of France, Canada, Japan and Mauritania, as well as by the observers for the Niger, Ghana, Australia, Suriname, Thailand and India. The observer for Palestine also made a statement.

83. Also at the same meeting, the observers for the Islamic Development Bank, the African Development Bank, OECD and the European Community and the representatives of IMF, the World Bank, the Universal Postal Union, the ILO and UNIDO made statements.

84. At the 5th meeting, the Chairman made a statement and the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

85. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (m) of its agenda.

86. At the same meeting, following statements by the observers for Suriname and Palestine, the Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/113).

N. Development indicators

87. The Commission considered item 3 (n) of its agenda at its 5th and 7th meetings, on 28 and 29 February 2008.

88. At the 5th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United States, Jamaica, Japan, China, Finland, Canada, the Sudan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Colombia and Mauritania, as well as by the observers for Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the States Members of the United

Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), Argentina, India, Brazil, Jordan, Egypt and Suriname. The observer for the Holy See also made a statement.

89. At the same meeting, the Chairman made a statement and the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Commission

90. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission had before it a paper submitted by the Rapporteur containing a draft decision for adoption by the Commission under item 3 (n) of its agenda.

91. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Finland and the United States and the observers for Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and for India. In her statement, the observer for Antigua and Barbuda (speaking on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), expressed concerns about the quality of indicators. The Commission adopted the draft decision as amended during the discussion (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/114).

Chapter III
Items for information

A. Health statistics

Action taken by the Commission

1. The Commission considered item 4 (a) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics (E/CN.3/2008/15).

2. At its 6th meeting, on 28 February, following statements by the representatives of the United States of America and Japan, as well as by the observer for Australia and the representatives of the ILO and the World Health Organization, the Commission took note of the report of the Secretary-General on health statistics (E/CN.3/2008/15) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/115).

B. Population and housing censuses

Action taken by the Commission

3. The Commission considered item 4 (b) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General on population and housing censuses (E/CN.3/2008/16) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

C. Round Table on Business Survey Frames

Action taken by the Commission

4. The Commission considered item 4 (c) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Round Table on Business Survey Frames (E/CN.3/2008/17).

5. At the 6th meeting, on 28 February, following a statement made by the observer for Australia, the Commission took note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Round Table on Business Survey Frames (E/CN.3/2008/17) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

D. International merchandise trade statistics

Action taken by the Commission

6. The Commission considered item 4 (d) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (E/CN.3/2008/18) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

E. Statistics of international trade in services

Action taken by the Commission

7. The Commission considered item 4 (e) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services (E/CN.3/2008/19) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

F. Ottawa Group on Price Indexes

Action taken by the Commission

8. The Commission considered item 4 (f) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Ottawa Group on Price Indexes (E/CN.3/2008/20) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

G. Statistics of science and technology

Action taken by the Commission

9. The Commission considered item 4 (g) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (E/CN.3/2008/21) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

H. Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics

Action taken by the Commission

10. The Commission considered item 4 (h) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics (E/CN.3/2008/22) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

I. Agricultural statistics

Action taken by the Commission

11. The Commission considered item 4 (i) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Wye Group on statistics on rural development and agriculture household income (E/CN.3/2008/23).

12. At the 6th meeting, on 28 February, the statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France, as well as by the observer for Peru. The representative of the European Community also made a statement.

13. At the same meeting, the Commission took note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Wye Group on statistics on rural development and agriculture household income (E/CN.3/2008/23) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

J. Environment statistics

Action taken by the Commission

14. The Commission considered item 4 (j) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics (E/CN.3/2008/24) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

K. Environmental accounting

Action taken by the Commission

15. The Commission considered item 4 (k) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (E/CN.3/2008/25) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

L. Coordination and integration of statistical programmes

Action taken by the Commission

16. The Commission considered item 4 (l) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (E/CN.3/2008/26);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (E/CN.3/2008/27) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

M. International economic and social classifications

Action taken by the Commission

17. The Commission considered item 4 (m) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the International Labour Organization (E/CN.3/2008/28).

18. At the 6th meeting, on 28 February, following a statement by the representative of the ILO, the Commission took note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the ILO (E/CN.3/2008/28) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

N. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions

Action taken by the Commission

19. The Commission considered item 4 (n) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General on policy decisions of ECOSOC that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission (E/CN.3/2008/30) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

O. Principles governing international statistical activities

Action taken by the Commission

20. The Commission considered item 4 (o) of its agenda at its 6th meeting, on 28 February 2008. It had before it the note by the Secretary-General on the implementation of principles governing international statistical activities (E/CN.3/2008/31) (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/117).

Chapter IV

Programme questions (United Nations Statistics Division)

1. The Commission considered item 5 of its agenda at its 7th meeting, on 29 February 2008.

2. At the 7th meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division made an oral report on the current activities, plans and priorities of the Division.

3. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Mexico, Canada, the United States of America and South Africa, as well as by the observer for India. The observer for Palestine also made a statement.

Action taken by the Commission

4. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission took note of the oral report made by the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 39/116).

Chapter V

Provisional agenda and dates for the fortieth session of the Commission

1. The Commission considered item 6 of its agenda at its 7th meeting, on 29 February 2008. It had before it the following documents, which were introduced and orally revised by the Chief of the Statistical Services Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs:

(a) Provisional agenda and documentation for the fortieth session of the Commission (E/CN.3/2008/L.2);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General containing the draft multi-year programme of work for the Commission for 2008-2011 (E/CN.3/2008/32).

2. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Germany, Finland, Lebanon and South Africa, as well as by the observers for Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and India. The observer for Palestine and the representative of UNESCO also made statements, to which the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division responded.

Action taken by the Commission

3. At its 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Commission approved the provisional agenda for its fortieth session as orally amended and entrusted the Bureau to streamline and finalize it. The Commission also decided to recommend it, as orally amended, to the Council for approval (see chap. I, sect. A).

4. At the same meeting, the Commission decided to recommend to the Council that its fortieth session be held from 24 to 27 February 2009 (see chap. I, sect. A).

5. Also at its 7th meeting, the Commission approved its draft multi-year programme of work for 2008-2011, as orally amended.

Chapter VI
Report of the Commission on its thirty-ninth session

1. The Commission considered item 7 of its agenda at its 7th meeting, on 29 February 2008.

2. At the 7th meeting, on 29 February, the Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Commission on its thirty-ninth session (E/CN.3/2008/L.3) and an informal paper containing draft decisions.

3. At the same meeting, the representative of Finland made a statement and orally revised document E/CN.3/2008/L.3.

4. Also at the 7th meeting, statements on the text of the informal paper were made by the representatives of Canada, France, South Africa, Germany, Lebanon, Finland and the United States of America, as well as by the observers for Suriname, India, Niger, the Bahamas, New Zealand and Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China). The observer for Palestine and the representative of UNIDO also made statements.

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division responded to points raised during the discussion.

Action taken by the Commission

6. Also at its 7th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft report, including the draft decisions therein, as orally amended, and entrusted the Rapporteur with finalizing it. After the adoption of the draft report, the representative of the United States made a statement.

Chapter VII
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Statistical Commission held its thirty-ninth session at United Nations Headquarters from 26 to 29 February 2008. The Commission held 7 meetings (1st to 7th).

B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of 23 States members of the Commission. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations and for non-Member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended. A list of participants is contained in document E/CN.3/2008/INF/1.

C. Election of officers

3. At its 1st meeting, on 26 February 2008, the Commission elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairperson:
Pali Lehohla (South Africa)

Vice-Chairpersons:
Heli Jeskanen-Sundström (Finland)
Héctor Maldonado Gómez (Colombia)
Ali Bin Mahboob bin Hassan (Oman)

Rapporteur:
Péter Pukli (Hungary)

D. Agenda and organization of work

4. At its 1st meeting, on 26 February 2008, following statements made by the observer for Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and the representative of China, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda as contained in document E/CN.3/2008/1, as orally revised. The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Items for discussion and decision:
   (a) Programme review: employment statistics;
   (b) Education statistics;
   (c) International Comparison Programme;

(d) National accounts;

(e) Integrated economic statistics;

(f) Tourism statistics;

(g) Distributive trade statistics;

(h) Industrial statistics;

(i) International merchandise trade statistics;

(j) Statistics of human development;

(k) Collection and dissemination of statistics by the United Nations Statistics Division;

(l) Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata;

(m) Regional statistical development in Africa;

(n) Development indicators.

4. Items for information:

(a) Health statistics;

(b) Population and housing censuses;

(c) Round table on business survey frames;

(d) International merchandise trade statistics;

(e) Statistics of international trade in services;

(f) Ottawa Group on Price Indexes;

(g) Statistics of science and technology;

(h) Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics;

(i) Agricultural statistics;

(j) Environment statistics;

(k) Environmental accounting;

(l) Coordination and integration of statistical programmes;

(m) International economic and social classifications;

(n) Follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions;

(o) Principles governing international statistical activities.

5. Programme questions (United Nations Statistics Division).

6. Provisional agenda and dates for the fortieth session of the Commission.

7. Report of the Commission on its thirty-ninth session.

5. At the same meeting, the Commission approved the organization of work of the session (E/CN.3/2008/L.1), as orally revised.

6. Also at its 1st meeting, the Commission invited the following organizations to participate as observers at the thirty-ninth session: Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa; Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics; Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries; Bank for International Settlements; Banque centrale des états de l'Afrique de l'Ouest; and Pacific Community.

E. Documentation

7. The documents before the Commission at its thirty-ninth session are listed on the website of the United Nations Statistics Division (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/sc2008.htm).

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